

Message Text

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42

ORIGIN NEA-12

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

INFO AMCONSUL MADRAS

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SCUL, IN, US

SUBJ: NORTON SIMON NATARAJA

REF: NEW DELHI 1479

1. MACFARLAND OF NORTON SIMON FOUNDATION CALLED KUX DECEMBER 18, EAGER TO OBTAIN DETAILS OF AIDE MEMOIRE, WHICH, HOWEVER, NOT YET RECEIVED IN INS. KUX PROMISED CALL BACK WHEN DOCUMENT ARRIVES.

2. MACFARLAND ALSO REPORTED THAT FOUNDATION ATTORNEY HELEN BUCKLEY HAS BEEN IN TOUCH WITH INDIAN DCM ERIC GONSALVES TO MAKE SOME SUGGESTIONS HOW PROBLEM MIGHT BE SOLVED. GONSALVES, ACCORDING TO MACFARLAND, IS ASKING TIKKI KAUL TO SEE IF SOME COMMON GROUND BETWEEN FOUNDATION AND GOI CAN BE FOUND. GONSALVES HAD PREVIOUSLY TOLD US SIMILAR STORY, IMPLYING THAT TWO SIDES HAVE BEGUN TO DICKER.

3. WE GATHER FROM MACFARLAND HAT THERE PRESSURE FOR QUICK SETTLEMENT SINCE NATARAJA WAS TO HAVE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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BEEN CENTERPIECE OF PLANNED EARLY SPRING 1974 MET EXHIBIT.

WHILE WE WILL AVOID GETTING INVOLVED IN DETAILS WHICH BEST SORTED OUT BY SIMON FOUNDATION LAWYERS AND GOI, WE WILL FOLLOW UP YOUR TALKS WITH TEJA WITH GONSALVES, SUGGESTING GOI PROMPTLY AVAIL SELF OF MACFARLAND OFFER COME TO DELHI.

4. ONCE AIDE MEMOIRE RECEIVED, WE WILL ALSO EXPLORE QUESTIONS IT RAISES. AS RESULT VISIT IN MID YEAR BY MADRAS DEPUTY IG OF POLICE, JUSTICE AND CUSTOMS ALREADY HAVE CONSIDERABLE KNOWLEDGE OF NATARAJA PROBLEM. ON LARGER QUESTION OF TRAFFIC IN STOLEN ART OBJECTS*, WE NOW EXPECT GONSALVES TO COME IN FOR DISCUSSION AFTER THE HOLIDAYS.

5. ON ANOTHER ART PROBLEM THE INDIAN EMBASSY LAST WEEK RAISED QUESTION OF A GROUP OF STATUES ALLEGEDLY STOLEN FROM NALANDA MUSEUM IN BIHAR IN 1961-62, WHICH, THEY SAID, HAD BEEN SUBJECT OF INQUIRY IN PARLIAMENT, AND WHICH THEY CLAIMED WERE IN THE BOSTON MUSEUM. WE HAVE CHECKED WITH BOSTON, WHICH REPORTS THE STORY IS BOTH OLD AND UNFOUNDED. THE BOSTON MUSEUM HAS HAD EXTENSIVE CORRESPONDENCE WITH THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF INDIA ON IT. RUSH

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